



December 2019

7th SAT Reasoning and Subject Exams

(register by 11/8—late registration 11/19)

14th— ACT and ACT With Writing

(register by 11/8—late registration 11/22)

Underclassmen — Review PSAT report with advisor and map out a plan for test preparation

Schedule spring SAT/ACT testing dates

Seniors — File any additional college applications before deadlines

January 2020

Seniors – Search and apply for scholarships that match your qualifications

Seniors – File any additional college applications

How to Ace Your College Interview

College interviews come in several different formats. Most are 'informational', some are 'recommended' and others may be 'evaluative'. We will touch upon each one in turn, but first, it's important to understand why colleges offer the option of an interview. Several Ivy League colleges recommend an interview, but you should read 'recommended' as 'required'. Colleges want to enroll students who will enhance their campus community, bring new ideas and generate new knowledge. They want to admit young people who will engage in the college life, be a good roommate, and show themselves as both mature and ready to take on the advanced rigor of a college classroom. Interviews are also wonderful opportunities for you to ask your questions. Think of the interview as a two-way conversation - Stanford calls it a 'two-way exchange' – it's not just the college wanting to ask you important questions, but it's also about you finding out as much as you can about your colleges so you can make an informed decision.

Informational interviews are the most common. This type of interview is about an exchange of information – what do you want to know about your college and what do they need to know about you? Interviews are most often conducted by alumni of that college – unfortunately, you have no way of knowing if the person you meet graduated a couple of years ago or 20 years ago - you cannot choose your interviewer.

Alumni interviews are typically held off campus, at a public location convenient for the student. Interviewers will reach out to applicants to schedule their meeting –

usually at a coffee shop but sometimes at the interviewer's place of business. Dress smart casual; one little tip is to wear something small in the colors of the college – blue earrings or a red tie – as a subtle way of showing interest. Your interviewer will only have your contact information. They have not read your application or your essays, nor do they have any access to your academic record or test scores. The interviewer's role is to assess your level of interest and to answer your questions. They provide feedback to the college with their impressions but they do not have the power to render any admissions decisions.

Go into your interview well-prepared with at least 5-7 questions that highlight both your own passions and your enthusiasm for the college in question. Examples are "I have read about the exciting research happening in the Math Department – how easy is it for first-year students to engage in faculty led research?" or "I was really interested to read about the Living and Learning options for first-year students. Can you share more about this?" Or "I love to snowboard – what can you tell me about the ways in which students are able to get to the slopes on the weekend?" Don't read your questions from a piece of paper; have them committed to memory before you sit down with your interviewer, and make them meaningful.

Evaluative interviews are more intense both in terms of importance and engagement. In this more-targeted interview, the interviewer is really going to zero in on your readiness for their college. Are you able to demonstrate the required resilience, academic integrity, and personal drive that the college demands of its students? Don't think that (continued on p. 3)

NEPA Career & College Counseling Associates

Career Paths for Animation Majors

- Video Game Designer
- Art Director
- Character Animator
- Graphic Programmer
- Film and Video Editor
- Visual Effects Artist
- Cartoonist
- Layout Artist
- Mathematical Modeler
- Game Designer
- Storyboard Artist
- Web Developer
- Character Rigger
- Forensic Animator
- FX Artist
- 3D Modeler/3D Tracker
- Background Painter
- Flash Director
- Color Key Artist



Majoring in Animation

Animators work as multi-media artists to express stories and concepts by creating animation, special effects and other images using computers and various electronic tools. Animation is essentially a type of visual storytelling; it is an expressive art form that delivers content in a format that is able to surpass reality. Exciting and intriguing graphics and realistic special effects are used in many industries. While animators often work in the entertainment industry, there are many jobs available in other fields also, such as advertising and education.

In entertainment, animation is used in many different places. Animators work to create video games for PCs and consoles. Within video game animation, job options include being a modeler, a texture artist, an animator, and a motion-capture artist. Video design companies are also employed to create educational and training videos. Animators frequently work in television and film production. Since animated characters and landscapes are much less expensive than creating live productions with highly paid actors, it is a popular entertainment medium. Big name companies such as Disney and Pixar employ animators, along with smaller independent film producers and even local television stations. In film, job options include working as a background artist, a compositor, a character animator, and a rendering artist. A single animated film may require as many as 500 animators, so there are lots of employment opportunities in this industry.

Advertising employs animators to help promote and sell brands and products. Animation is a powerful tool for entertaining and effectively communicating a message. For example, everyone knows who the Geico Gecko and Mr. Clean are; their television commercials are frequent and

entertaining, and although they are unrealistic, they are imaginative and explanatory. Many industries, from business to technology to medicine, look to animation to convey information.

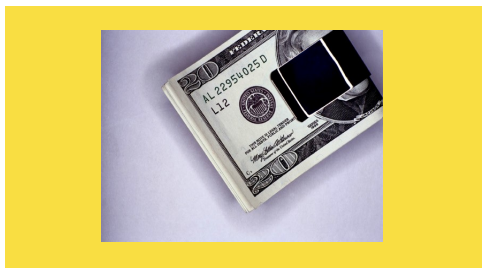
In education, animation is used to teach and get information across in an entertaining, tangible way. Educational videos, e-books, and games are used both in primary and secondary education, to make learning more fun and understandable.

Animation majors can also find work in web design, publishing, graphic design and art directing. Some choose to freelance and work for a variety of employers. One common example of freelancing is as a forensic animator, someone who helps investigators piece together crime scenes and explain evidence for presentation to a jury, or assists in insurance and liability claims. Mathematical modelers, perhaps the most specialized type of animation, use complex formulae to generate complex models, which are often used in the fields of engineering and aeronautics.

Animation majors should have an interest and strong skills in drawing, the arts, and computer technology. College courses for this major cover the technical aspects of computer animation along with the physical aspects of drawing. Students can expect to take classes in multimedia design, 3D modeling, animation, and character design. They may also take 2-D and 3-D animation, life drawing, texture and lighting, and digital imaging.

Colleges with strong animation programs to prepare students for these exciting careers can be found at <https://www.theartcareerproject.com/schools/animation/>

Financial Matters: Understanding Your Student Aid Report



Families applying for financial aid for college must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**) as a first step in the financial aid process. Within 2-4 weeks after you submit your FAFSA online, you will receive a Student Aid Report or **SAR**. (If you chose to receive this by email it should arrive within a few days of completing the FAFSA online.) The colleges that you identify on the FAFSA will also receive a copy of this report.

If your FAFSA was incomplete, log on to your FAFSA account and click on *Make FAFSA Corrections*. Enter your FSA ID and add and submit needed corrections. If your FAFSA application is complete, an Expected Family Con-

tribution (the **EFC**) is displayed on the top right of page 1 of the SAR. If there is an asterisk next to the EFC, it means your form has been flagged for verification. Verification requires your family to submit additional documentation to qualify for federal financial aid.

The EFC is the number that your colleges use to determine your eligibility for federal grants, loans, and work-study programs. The EFC is **not** the amount your family will have to pay for college, **nor** is it the amount of federal aid you will receive. Each of your colleges will use the EFC, however, in structuring your financial aid package. The college financial aid office will subtract your EFC from their total cost of attendance to determine your **need**.

In today's economic climate, relatively few colleges can guarantee to meet 100% of demonstrated need. Those that do will make up the difference between cost and EFC with a package that consists of grants, work-study,

and, often, student loans. Colleges that do not have the financial resources to meet 100% of need will do their best to make their college affordable, but will award the best packages to their most desirable applicants.

When you first completed your FAFSA, you were able to send your SAR to up to ten colleges. Once you have your SAR, you can remove colleges that received the report and add additional colleges as necessary. Just log in with your FSA ID, click on *Make FAFSA Corrections*, and then on *add/remove colleges*. You are also able to make changes directly on the SAR and re-submit it.

Have questions? Contact the U.S. Department of Education Help Desk at: 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) as well as your college's (or prospective college's) financial aid office.

How to Ace Your College Interview (continued from p.1)

you have to walk in with a laundry list of your accomplishments and achievements – you don't! Be ready, however, to engage in a meaningful conversation that allows you to showcase some important aspects of what makes you a good fit. Always be clear on what you want from your college; do your homework very thoroughly; read through your application again so you can be ready to discuss some aspects of their application questions that your interviewer might refer to.

Make sure that you are on time, or early, for your interview. Learn something about your interviewer, if possible

(Google can be enlightening); reread your application; prepare your questions; make steady eye contact with your interviewer and find a way of saying that this college is your first choice – they'll make a note of that in their report. Don't forget to retain your interviewer's contact information and send a hand-written note of thanks that same evening. Email is probably fine too, but no texts! Assume that your interviewer will ask you about your choice of major, why you want to attend that college, and your high school experiences, good and bad. Be ready to talk about yourself in a way that highlights your strengths, shares what

matters to you and why, and connects your interests with the college's mission. Make sure you mention things that maybe weren't in your application and be enthusiastic.

Try to do some practice in advance. Ask if a teacher might have time to do a practice interview with you - it can ease your nerves. Interviewers do understand that the young person in front of them is probably very nervous because they know how much this interview means to you, but try hard to keep your nerves in check. Breathe deeply to calm yourself, put a big smile on your face, and walk in with confidence! You will do just fine!



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Dealing With Deferrals

Applying to college is both exciting and stressful. Just as there are several different types of applications – binding ED, early action, and regular decision – there are different types of outcomes. Typically, *early* applications will receive one of three decisions – admit, deny, or defer. The first two options are clear: you are either offered a place in the upcoming class or you are told that you don't meet their requirements for admission.

An admission deferral is something different. Early applicants who find themselves in this position liken it to being in 'limbo land'. You may feel very disappointed and may even feel 'rejected'...but, remember, you are *not* being denied. Deferral means that your early application will be reconsidered within the context of the regular decision applicant pool.

Being deferred from the early application round means that you have met a level of competence that makes you admissible, or, in other words, the admission office sees your potential. It also means that the admission office wants to have another look at your credentials in comparison to the larger regular decision applicant pool. You do have to wait longer for your final decision, but this gives you time to really work on your other applications and build up your résumé.

If you still want to attend the school that deferred your application, start by sending their admission office a letter/email that states that you remain committed. If you

can say so honestly, confirm that if admitted, you will be able to attend. Make sure that you also read any helpful information your college shares on its website about its deferral decisions.

Keep up the good work in school. Fall semester senior grades are very important. Stay in contact with the admission office and send updated mid-year grades, new test scores, new academic information, recommendations, honors and/or awards. Do NOT resend any information already submitted with your application!

Think carefully about your other college options. Should you spread your list out a little wider? If you are truly shocked at your deferral decision, be honest with yourself now. If most of your other colleges share the same academic profile, broaden your scope to include more safety options. Use this time to really explore all other opportunities.

Visit campus in person and meet with your admission officer. Tell him or her of your sustained and eager interest and, if that school is your first choice, make that clear. Ask if additional letters of recommendation are welcome.

Remain positive and engaged in your high school experiences. This will not only make you feel better, but it will continue to prepare you for the next steps, regardless of where you end up. Be proactive but, above all, stay positive and believe in yourself – you will find the right college that will also really want you!